CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

CD/1552
27 August 1998

ENGLISH
Original: SPANISH

LETTER DATED 24 AUGUST 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES OF BRAZIL, CHILE AND ARGENTINA ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT TRANSMITTING THE TEXT OF THE POLITICAL DECLARATION OF MERCOSUR, BOLIVIA AND CHILE AS A ZONE OF PEACE SIGNED BY THE GOVERNMENTS OF ARGENTINA, BOLIVIA, BRAZIL, CHILE, PARAGUAY AND URUGUAY AT USHUAIA, ARGENTINE REPUBLIC, ON 24 JULY 1998

We have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the Political Declaration of Mercosur, Bolivia and Chile as a Zone of Peace signed by the Governments of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay at Ushuaia, Argentine Republic, on 24 July 1998.

As we indicated in the statement made by Ambassador Juan C. Sánchez Arnau on behalf of the Mercosur countries, Bolivia and Chile during the plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament held on 30 July 1998, we should be grateful if you would arrange for the present document to be circulated as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament and distributed to all the delegations of member States and to the non-member States that participate in the work of the Conference.

(Signed) Celso Lafer
Ambassador
Representative of the
Permanent Mission of
Brazil to the International
Agencies

(Signed) Javier Illanes Fernandez
Ambassador
Representative of the
Permanent Mission of
Chile to the International
Agencies

(Signed) Juan C. Sánchez Arnau
Ambassador
Representative of the
Permanent Mission of Argentina
to the International Agencies

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POLITICAL DECLARATION OF MERCOSUR, BOLIVIA AND CHILE AS A ZONE OF PEACE

THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC, THE REPUBLIC OF BOLIVIA, THE FEDERATIVE REPUBLIC OF BRAZIL, THE REPUBLIC OF CHILE, THE REPUBLIC OF PARAGUAY AND THE EASTERN REPUBLIC OF URUGUAY,

CONVINCED that peace is the main desire of our peoples, forms the basis of the development of humanity and is the fundamental condition for the existence and continuity of MERCOSUR,

CONFIRMING their commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Charter of the Organization of American States,

REAFFIRMING that the faithful respect of those principles and purposes, the strengthening of representative democracy, respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms, social progress and the protection of the environment are essential to the safeguarding of peace and security in the region,

BEARING IN MIND that progress in the processes of integration in which they are engaged has contributed effectively to the creation of the present climate of growing confidence and cooperation,

CONVINCED that an effective security system is essential to the development of our peoples,

REITERATING the decision taken in connection with the adoption by the OAS General Assembly in 1991 of the Santiago Agreement to initiate a process of consultation on hemispheric security in the light of the new conditions in the region and the world,

REAFFIRMING the full validity of the 1995 Santiago Declaration and the 1998 San Salvador Declaration on confidence- and security-building measures and the need to continue the process of strengthening confidence and security in the region,

EMPHASIZING that the Parties have adopted a range of measures conducive to a joint response to the threat of arms proliferation, contributing thereby to the strengthening of the concept of a region united by cooperation and free from the risks of an arms race, a phenomenon for which, in our context of integration, there is no justification,

REITERATING our full support for the Treaty of Tlatelolco for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean and expressing our satisfaction at the full operation of that non-proliferation instrument in our territories,

REAFFIRMING the full validity of the 1991 Mendoza Agreement on the Complete Prohibition of Chemical and Biological Weapons,

RECALLING that MERCOSUR constitutes a process open to other States in the region that share the above principles,

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

1. TO DECLARE MERCOSUR, Bolivia and Chile as a zone of peace, free from weapons of mass destruction;

2. TO STATE that peace is essential to the continuity and development of the process of integration within MERCOSUR;

3. TO STRENGTHEN the mechanisms for consultation and cooperation on matters of security and defence that exist between the member countries and promote growing linkages between them and to further cooperation in the areas of confidence-building and security-building measures and promote their implementation;

4. TO SUPPORT in the relevant international forums the full application and the strengthening of instruments and mechanisms for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction;

5. TO MAKE concerted efforts in the relevant international forums to make headway, in the context of a gradual and systematic process, in consolidating international agreements designed to attain the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects;

6. TO MAKE PROGRESS towards the realization of a zone free from anti-personnel landmines in MERCOSUR, Bolivia and Chile and to endeavour to extend that zone to the entire western hemisphere;

7. TO REAFFIRM their commitment to broaden and systematize the information that they provide to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and to establish a uniform methodology to provide information on military expenditure, with a view to increasing transparency and fostering confidence in this domain;

8. TO SUPPORT the work of the Committee on Hemispheric Security of the Organization of American States, especially as regards the mandate entrusted to it in the Plan of Action of the Second Summit of the Americas;

9. TO ENCOURAGE cooperation between our members with a view to the exclusively peaceful and safe use of nuclear energy and space science and technology;

10. TO TRANSMIT this Declaration to the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the Organization of American States and to request them to circulate it as an official document of those organizations.

DONE at Ushuaia, Argentine Republic, this 24th day of July 1998.

(Signed) CARLOS SAUL MENEM
President of the
Argentine Republic

(Signed) FERNANDO H. CARDOSO
President of the Federative
Republic of Brazil

(Signed) JUAN CARLOS WASMOSY
President of the
Republic of Paraguay

(Signed) JULIO MARIA SANGUINETTI
President of the
Eastern Republic of Uruguay

(Signed) HUGO BANZER
President of the
Republic of Bolivia

(Signed) EDUARDO FREI RUIZ-TAGLE
President of the
Republic of Chile